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1965 MAY 20 AM 9 07

VV MJB964JIA038
RR RUEHCR
DE RUMJIR 1010A 20/1230Z
R 201222Z ZEA
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO RUEHCR/SECSTATE WASHDC 3820
INFO RUHLHQ/CINCPAC 2217
RUMTBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 881
RUMJFS/AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 640
STATE GRNC
BT
~~S E C R E T~~ MAY 20

FOR GREENFIELD

PASS USIA FOR BUNCE, DOD FOR SYLVESTER

JOINT MISSION MESSAGE

EMBTEL 3539

IN FURTHER DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED HANDLING QUESTION OF BROADER COMBAT MISSION FOR U.S. FORCES IN VIETNAM DISCUSSED IN REFTEL, MISSION ELEMENTS INVOLVED HAVE CONCURRED IN TEXT GIVEN BELOW FOR USE IN RESPONSE TO INQUIRIES WHEN INITIAL COMBAT MISSION SUPPORT UNDERTAKEN.

PAGE 2 RUMJIR 1010A ~~S E C R E T~~
PROSPECT OF EXPANDED MISSION FOR US COMBAT FORCES HERE HAS BEEN DISCUSSED OF COURSE TO SOME EXTENT BY VARIOUS CORRESPONDENTS AND IN FACT MACV SPOKESMAN TWO WEEKS AGO POINTED OUT THAT BOTH MARINES AND AIRBORNE BRIGADE HAVE COMBAT SUPPORT ROLE, IN ADDITION TO DEFENSIVE MISSION. HOWEVER, WHILE THERE HAS THUS BEEN SOME PUBLIC AWARENESS OF EXPANDED MISSION, DO NOT BELIEVE IMPORT OF DECISION HAS FULLY SUNK HOME AND WE EXPECT THAT QUESTIONS WILL BE RAISED WHEN AND IF FIRST SUCH ACTUAL COMBAT SUPPORT MISSION IS UNDERTAKEN. IN THAT EVENT, WE WOULD PROPOSE TO USE TEXT BELOW IN RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS.

BEGIN TEXT:

MISSION OF US FORCES IN VIETNAM

~~SECRET~~

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Authority State 11-2-78 letter
By ... NARS, Date 1-29-80

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THE MISSION OF THE USMC III MARINE AMPHIBIOUS FORCE AND THE US ARMY 173RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE ARE TO ASSIST IN THE DEFENSE OF THE KEY INSTALLATIONS IN THEIR AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY AND TO PROVIDE COMBAT SUPPORT TO THE ARMED FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM AS THE SITUATION REQUIRES. THE CONDUCT OF AN EFFECTIVE DEFENSE WILL INVOLVE PATROLLING IN DEPTH AND CLEARING OPERATIONS IN AREAS CONTIGUOUS TO THEIR BASE AREAS. IN THEIR COMBAT SUPPORT ROLE,

PAGE 3 RUMJIR 1010A ~~S E C R E T~~
THEY ARE AVAILABLE TO ASSIST RVNAF IN OPERATIONS IN CLOSE COORDINATION WITH APPROPRIATE RVNAF COMMANDERS. END TEXT.

APPRECIATE WASHINGTON REACTION. TAYLOR.
BT

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